

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ACCRA 03291 01 OF 02 031826Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----031829Z 113381 /41

O 031702Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY ACCRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7810
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ACCRA 3291

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, US, SF, RH, OVIP (MONDALE, VICE PRESIDENT WALTER)
SUBJ: BRIEFING OF ACHEAMPONG ON VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE'S
MEETING WITH VORSTER

REF: (A) STATE 99551 (B) STATE 99562

1. PURSUANT TO REFTEL INSTRUCTIONS, I CALLED ON CHAIRMAN
ACHEAMPONG AT 1300 LOCAL MAY 3 AND BRIEFED HIM ALONG
THE LINES PARAS 9-11 OF REF A. HE RECEIVED ME PRIVATELY.
AT OUTSET I STRESSED SENSITIVITY OF SUBJECT AND
IMPORTANCE WE ATTACHED TO ACHEAMPONG'S FULL UNDERSTANDING
OF BACKGROUND AND PURPOSES OF FORTHCOMING VIENNA MEETING
BETWEEN THE VICE PRESIDENT AND VORSTER. ACHEAMPONG
LISTENED INTENTLY, ASKED ME FOR A COPY OF MY BRIEFING
PAPER (I COMPLIED) AND, AFTER SCANNING IT BRIEFLY,
EXCLAIMED "GOOD FOR YOU"* HE SAID PRESIDENT CARTER'S
DECISION TO SEND THE VICE PRESIDENT TO MEET WITH VORSTER
WAS "AN EXCELLENT IDEA" WHICH HE FULLY SUPPORTED. HE
SAID HE HAS NEVER HAD ANY DOUBTS ABOUT THE PRESIDENT'S
SINCERITY IN HIS SEARCH FOR A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO
SOUTHERN AFRICAN PROBLEMS AND BELIEVED THE VIENNA
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MEETING BETWEEN THE VICE PRESIDENT AND VORSTER WAS YET
ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THIS.

2. HE THEN GRABBED A NOTEPAD AND BEGAN WRITING,
EXPLAINING THAT IT WAS A REMINDER TO HIMSELF TO DISCUSS
WITH JOE APPIAH (COMMISSIONER AND SPECIAL ADVISOR
TO CHIEF OF STATE, ROVING AMBASSADOR, AND POSSIBLY

PRIME MINISTER UNDER A FUTURE UNION GOVERNMENT) THE POSSIBILITY OF ISSUING A STATEMENT PROCLAIMING GHANA'S SUPPORT OF THE MEETING AND ITS HOPE THAT VORSTER "WILL LISTEN TO THE VICE PRESIDENT." I THANKED ACHEAMPONG FOR HIS UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT AND SAID I FELT CERTAIN THAT MY GOVERNMENT WOULD BE GRATIFIED BY IT.

3. ACHEAMPONG SAID THE TIMING OF MY CALL TO BRIEF HIM COULD NOT HAVE BEEN BETTER, BECAUSE HE WANTED TO TELL ME ABOUT THE INITIATIVE HE HAD JUST TAKEN TO BRING THE FOUR MAJOR ZIMBABWEAN NATIONALIST LEADERS TO ACCRA IN ORDER TO "TALK SENSE TO THEM." HE SAID HE HAD LONG BEEN DISTRESSED AT INFIGHTING AMONG THESE LEADERS AND AT THE POTENTIAL IN ZIMBABWE FOR FURTHER BLOODSHED--EVEN AFTER INDEPENDENCE WAS ACHIEVED--IF THEY DID NOT COME TOGETHER IN SOME DEGREE OF UNITY. HE ATTACHED PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE TO THEIR REACHING AGREEMENT ON PROVIDING "SPECIFIC GUARANTEES TO THE WHITE POPULATION OF ZIMBABWE WHICH WOULD KEEP THEM FROM FLEEING THE COUNTRY," FOR THERE WOULD BE A CONTINUING NEED FOR THEIR EXPERTISE. HE HAD THEREFORE ASKED JOE APPIAH TO UNDERTAKE THE TASK OF BRINGING THEM TO ACCRA AND TALKING FRANKLY TO EACH OF THE LEADERS SEPARATELY AND INDIVIDUALLY TO DEFINE THE AREAS OF AGREEMENT AND DISAGREEMENT. THEN, HOPEFULLY, IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO GET THEM TOGETHER IN A SHOW OF UNITY BEFORE LEAVING ACCRA. ACEHAMPONG SAID HE WAS MILDLY OPTIMISTIC THAT APPIAH WOULD SUCCEED AND ADDED

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THAT IF HE DID NOT, "IT WOULD NOT BE FOR LACK OF TRYING."

4. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION, ACHEAMPONG SAID THAT SITHOLE AND MUGABE HAD ALREADY ARRIVED IN ACCRA AND WERE BEING PUT UP AT STATE HOUSE. HE EXPECTED NKOMO TO ARRIVE LATER TODAY AND BISHOP MUZOREWA TOMORROW. MOST WOULD HAVE SMALL DELEGATIONS WITH THEM. I THANKED THE CHAIRMAN FOR THIS INFORMATION AND SAID THAT IT WAS PARTICULARLY USEFUL BECAUSE WE ALSO ATTACHED GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE BACKGROUND AND PURPOSES OF THE VICE PRESIDENT'S MEETING WITH VORSTER. I SAID I HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO BRIEF THEM ALONG SIMILAR LINES AND THAT WE WANTED HIM TO BE AWARE OF THIS. I THEN ASKED IF HIS OFFICE MIGHT ASSIST ME IN ARRANGING MEETINGS WITH THEM. HE SAID HE WOULD BE GLAD TO DO SO, FOR HE THOUGHT OUR BRIEFING THE NATIONALIST LEADERS IN THIS WAY WOULD BE HELPFUL. HE SAID HE WOULD HAVE APPIAH OR BEECHAM

(SECRETARY TO THE SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL) CALL ME
DIRECTLY TO MAKE THE ARRANGEMENTS.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ACCRA 3291

EXDIS

5. I THEN NOTED THAT THE MATTER OF U.S. PARTICIPATION
IN THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE ON ZIMBABWE
HAD BECOME SOMEWHAT CONTROVERSIAL AND ASKED HIS OWN
VIEWS ON THIS SUBJECT. ACHEAMPONG SAID HE PERSONALLY
SUPPORTED AND ATTACHED GREAT IMPORTANCE TO UR
PARTICIPATION IN SOME FORM. HE RECOGNIZED THAT
NKOMO AND MUGABE WERE OPPOSED AND ADDED THAT THIS
REFLECTED SOVIET PRESSURE ON THEM, AN ASPECT WHICH
WAS ONE OF HIS PRINCIPAL SOURCES OF CONCERN. GHANA,
HE SAID, LIKE THE UNITED STATES, WANTS DESPERATELY
TO STOP THE FIGHTING IN ZIMBABWE AND TO REACH A
PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM THERE. THIS NOT,
HE AVOWED, THE SOVIET GOAL, AND HE REMAINED DEEPLY
CONCERNED OVER SOVIET MOVES NOT ONLY IN ZIMBABWE BUT
THROUGHOUT THE CONTINENT. BANGING THE TABLE FOR
EMPHASIS, HE SAID THE RUSSIANS "ALWAYS PREY ON
SITUATIONS OF CHAOS." THIS IS WHY THEY DO NOT REALLY
WANT A PEACEFUL SOLUTION IN ZIMBABWE.

6. HE SAID APPIAH WILL MAKE A VIGOROUS EFFORT WHEN
HE TALKS TO NKOMO AND MUGABE TO GET THEM "TO SEE THE
LIGHT." HE SAID APPIAH WILL STRESS THAT IF THE
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NATIONALIST LEADERS DO NOT TAKE GHANA'S ADVICE, THE INEVITABLE RESULT WILL BE THAT THE SOVIETS WILL MOVE IN--WHETHER BEFORE OR AFTER INDEPENDENCE--WITH CIVIL WAR IN ZIMBABWE ALONG THE LINES OF ANGOLA CERTAIN TO FOLLOW. HE WAS CONVINCED THAT A REAL DIALOGUE AND UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE FOUR LEADERS WAS OF CRITICAL IMPORTANCE NOW, BEFORE IT WAS TOO LATE. HE COULD NOT PREDICT HOW LONG APPIAH'S MEETINGS WITH THE NATIONALIST LEADERS WOULD LAST, SAYING IT ALL DEPENDED ON HOW RESPONSIVE THEY WERE.

7. I ASKED ABOUT THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN THIS EFFORT. THE CHAIRMAN SAID THAT HE HAD DELIBERATELY NOT INVOLVED THEM, PREFERRING INSTEAD TO LEAVE THE NEGOTIATIONS TO APPIAH, WHOSE AFRICAN NATIONALIST CREDENTIALS WERE IMPECCABLE AND WHOSE LONG POLITICAL EXPERIENCE WAS KNOWN AND RESPECTED BY THE ZIMBABWEANS. HE SAID HE WOULD UNDER-TAKE EITHER DIRECTLY OR THROUGH APPIAH TO BRIEF ME ON THE RESULTS OF THE GHANAIAAN EFFORT. IN THE MEAN-TIME, HE PRAYED FOR THE SUCCESS OF VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE'S MEETING WITH VORSTER.

8. I THANKED THE CHAIRMAN FOR HIS CANDOR AND OFOR HIS WILLINGNESS TO ASSIST ME IN SETTING UP MEETINGS TO BRIEF THE ZIMBABWEANS. HE REITERATED THAT EITHER APPIAH OR BEECHAM WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH ME "SHORTLY."

9. COMMENT: WHILE I THINK ACHEAMPONG'S INITIATIVE IN MAKING THIS EFFORT IS COMMENDABLE--WHATEVER THE OUTCOME--I DO NOT ENTIRELY SHARE HIS CONFIDENCE IN JOE APPIAH, WITH WHOM I CHATTED JUST BEFORE SEEING THE CHAIRMAN. INDEED, I WOULD BE MORE COMFORTABLE IF COMMISSIONER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS FELLI WERE ALSO IN THE ACT AND BELIEVE HIS WOULD BE A STEADING AND MODERATING INFLUENCE. ACHEAMPONG LEFT ME WITH CONFIDENTIAL

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THE CLEAR IMPRESSION, HOWEVER, THAT THIS WOULD STRICTLY BE APPIAH'S SHOW. I WILL THEREFORE REMAIN IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH APPIAH AND REPORT THE INDIVIDUAL BRIEFING OF THE FOUR LEADERS AS THEY OCCUR.

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS TO OTHER POSTS AS APPROPRIATE.
SMITH

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